

Back to Koholint

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Summary: Link returns to the island of dreams, and is faced with what might be his greatest adventure yet. Link/Marin, on a side note

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1. Back to Koholint: (01)

I noticed that few people know about Koholint, and Marin. So here's a story about Link returning there, and his amazing adventures on the island of dreams.

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Chapter One

How many years? Maybe...no, he'd all but forgotten, lost count, something of that sort. He never remembered his dreams. And maybe, in this case, he wasn't remembering his reality either. He was tired as well, it wasn't helping. Every sleep now, for the past week had been disturbed, restless, troubled. He lay over on his stomach, rubbing his hands together. Nothing. He rolled out of bed, landing steadily on the floor. Cold.

"This is ridiculous. I need my rest," he muttered. "Even heroes need sleep." Link grimaced, tracing the dark ringlets under his eyes with the tip of his fingers.

He crawled back into his bed, melting into it's inviting warmth. He drifted off quickly, dozing in and out of that same curious partial slumber....

The air was sticky and moist. Link licked his lips. Salty. Cool ocean breezes rolled in from the sea. He was standing on a towering cliff, cut sharply into a mountain. Seagulls soared through the endless blue sky, speaking in their own tongue. Clouds of the purest white were scattered all about him, the sun a gleaming, golden ball. Just as it always looked. Everything was exactly the same. Only here, could he

see such perfection and not be overcome with shock. And only here, could he remember all that happened so long ago, at Koholint. And all that happened so long ago, with Marin.

That Ballad...the one she always played for him. It echoed in every breeze, every movement of the island. Marin's sweet, ringing voice blending into it. Link shivered, trying to etch the scene into his mind. He knew what would happen all too well now. Soon, he'd awake and remember nothing of Koholint, of Marin, of this dream...

"But it's not a dream," he whispered under his breath, "Somehow...this is real. I mean, Koholint it's..."

"The island of dreams."

Link whirled around to see Marin facing him. Her hair spread evenly over her shoulders, the same fiery red as he remembered. A single orchid adorned her head, her dress was simple, pure white, with just the slightest hint of rose. Her eyes, of the deepest midnight blue...they made Link feel overwhelmed, like he could lose himself in them forever.

"Marin..." he breathed, reaching out his hand to touch her, to see if she was truly there.

"No," she backed up, putting her hand defensively ahead of her. "Link, I've called you here all these nights for a reason. You must return to me. Come back to Koholint, Link. We need you." The wind blew freely about her, seeming to caress her in its folds.

"I don't know how..." Link's chest rose and fell rapidly.

"Yes you do," Marin narrowed her eyes, her lips setting into a firm line. "Link, come back to Koholint. You must..." she pleaded.

"But...I don't know the way..."

"Just return Link, only on a wave of dreams can you return..." her voice trembled, still full and clear. She pulled the orchid from her hair, and intertwined it with Link's fingers. He grasped it tightly, rubbing the delicate powder from its petals.

"I can't Marin I..."

"You must help us Link! Help us! Help me! Help my island..." hot tears caressed her warm, pink cheeks. "You just must come back to me...."

"I...I..." Link blinked his eyes. He was covered in a cold sweat, his bangs matted to his forehead. He ran a hand through his dampened hair, no salty ocean winds, not even the faintest breeze. "I knew it. What happened?" his mind was a blank. He knew he'd dreamt of something significant, that he needed to remember. He glanced down at his bed, thoroughly aggravated.

"Why? Why do I always forget? Damn it, I need my sleep!" he growled. "What the-?" An orchid was grasped tightly in his hand, flattened against his smooth, sticky palm. He had been holding onto it with such a great amount of strength, of force that it was almost imbedded

there. Links piercing eyes flickered with sudden vibrance.

"Marin!" he gasped, collapsing back on to his bed with awe.

Every night he'd returned to Koholint, and every morning he'd awake, sweating, afraid, and with not a single recollection of what had happened. Now he remembered. Koholint was in danger, and Marin needed him once more.

Marin...the one to whom he owed his life, his existence at that very moment. He would return to her, this he knew. But how?

"I'd all but forgotten about Koholint," he murmured, splashing his face with icy water from a basin. He shook his head, spraying droplets about the room.

On a wave of dreams...

"What did she mean?" Link sighed, propping himself up on his elbows.

Many nights passed, all restless, and yet Link did not return to Koholint. He found that he was growing irritable from the lack of sleep, and he spent his days pondering his path back to the island. Somehow he had to return. He groaned, rubbing his eyes, tossing in his fitful slumber.

"For the life of me, I just can't understand..."he mumbled. Link carefully drew out the orchid from beneath his pillow, pressing it on his palm, breathing in its scent, its very essence. Koholint. He longed to go back, more then ever. To experience it all once again, and the fact that he could not was infuriating.

"I know how to go there, I know the path to Koholint. All I have to do is dream myself there. All I have to do is let..." he faltered, "...is let my spirit return." He sighed, feeling utterly helpless, trapped in his world, and unable to reach any others. He closed his eyes, recalling the view from the cliffs, the scent of the salty sea air, the sounds of the gulls whispering to each other, and the sight of Marin, singing in her dulcet voice, while playing her harp.

He never knew just how long a night could last. That a mere eight hours could seem like an eternity. As he struggled to recall each memory from the deep recesses of his mind, he found himself drifting....

Cool winds...

Then nothing. If he could just recall one more memory...pull himself back...

The moistened sand beneath his feet.

It faded. He would go back soon...if only...

The pastoral splash of the waves against the beach.

So very clear...and then gone. Not now...he was almost there....

A lustrous corral piece, washed onto the shores.

Link reached down, wincing at his every movement for fear that he would soon be whisked back into his bed. And with the lightest of touches he picked up the shell. He was back in Koholint.

"Looks the same as always," Link whispered. "Just as it has these past nights. I'd better find Marin..." He placed the shell back down, burying it into the sand. It felt coarser than usual, less silky.

"You came back. I knew you'd find the path."

Link spun on his heels. "I got lost, sorry," he mumbled, not meeting her eyes. He knew who was speaking to him, after all this time he still remembered her voice, so mellifluous and songlike.

"You just took the long way around," she placed a graceful hand on his strong shoulder, gently turning him about so she could see him. "Link, you didn't forget me..."

"Never Marin, how could I?" he spoke softly.

"And my song...." she continued in a hushed whisper.

"I remember it."

Marin stroked his hair, running her delicate elfin fingers through the thick blond strands.

"You've not changed, Link. I knew you wouldn't...." she paused, allowing a light smile to grace her lips, "I knew you couldn't. And Link, I know you will be our savior. You are the only one who can help my island."

"I...I just can't...I don't know...want..."he broke off, "What happened?"

Marin put a single finger to her lips, signaling for him to be silent. "Now is not the time, later I shall tell you." She stood, very still, her hands clasped together behind her back. "Link, I'm so glad you came back to me." Her eyes welled with the trace of tears.

"Me too Marin, me too," Link wrapped his arms around her, trying to provide what little solace he could.

"I've been waiting so long, far too long," she murmured, her words barely audible.

"I know, Marin. I'm sorry."

"I kept waiting, just waiting every day for you to come back. For you to...to come and take me away from this island, so I could see what life is like away from here!" she pulled back, breaking away from Link. "And you never did," she finished bitterly, ever so softly.

"I'm sorry..." He'd never thought it possible to forget Marin. Many days he'd spent, fantasizing of the day when he would go back for her. Her determined spirit, her whimsical nature, everything about

her had thrilled him. And yet, somehow he'd forgotten her. Until now. Until these past nights.

"You brought me three things in my lifetime that I thought I'd never experience," she said quietly, "The first was fear. My island was pure before you came, it was safe. Yet when you arrived, strange creatures followed, monsters and demons roamed our shores, and Link, I was afraid."

"Secondly, you gave me spirit. Suddenly, I felt the need for adventure, the need to prove that I was courageous. Never before had I wanted that in the least, and yet with you, I needed it."

"And last Link, last you gave me love," she pressed her lips together, staring through him with a longing, so intense... "So when you left me, I felt like I was half a person. Like I only had part of my soul."

"You gave me that too, Marin," he sighed.

Marin shook her head. "I shouldn't be saying this now. You must be weary from your many nights without rest."

"Funny, but I no longer feel tired in the least," he shivered.

"Come on, we'll go to the cliffs. There, I'll tell you of the fate of Koholint, and of its people," Marin beckoned for him to follow her, as she scrambled up the steep rocks.

"You can see the whole island from here," Link breathed. He sat down firmly on the edge of the cliff atop.

"Only from here, can you see the whole world," Marin whispered. "All that ocean, it connects us all, no matter where we are. And all those stars, everyone, everywhere is staring at the same ones."

Link nodded vaguely, his clearest memories of Koholint took place where he was now. With Marin, looking at the night sky, telling her of places beyond her wildest dreams.

"Marin, why did you call me here?"

"I'm not sure. I sense an impending trouble of some sort, Link. Everyone else, even my father...they think I have an over active imagination," she rolled her eyes, "But I sense it. My island is in great danger, and I just know that you are the only one who can save us."

"You called me here on whim?"

"Well, I suppose. But it's not really a whim. I know we're in trouble, I'm sure of it." Marin sighed. Never before had he seen her like this, so disconsolate and melancholy. And it distressed him, greatly.

"Marin, I've always trusted you. Everything you say always seems to come true. You say no one believes you, but you're wrong," he placed his hand on her arm, "I do."

She leaned over, resting her head on his chest. "And will you save

us?"

"I'll try, I promise to try."

"That's all you can do. I don't expect anything more," she murmured. "Tell me, what is Hyrule like now?"

"Same as always, I guess," he stated, "not to exciting."

"Don't be ridiculous. Your land sounds amazing, absolutely fascinating! Someday I'll leave here, and I'll never come back. I'll live in a vast world, where I'm free to go where ever I want..." she sighed dreamily. "I've always yearned for life away from this island, since I was ever so small...I don't recall ever enjoying my life on Koholint. It was always, when can I leave? When can I escape and truly live?"

Her every word captivated him, drawing him into her thoughts and soul.

"Marin, will you sing for me?" Link grinned at her.

She blushed, allowing a smile to cross her lips, "Well, alright."

Marin's voice was undescrivable, so harmonious, so seraphic. It was rich, full of a vibrance he'd only heard in his dreams. She stopped abruptly, and began to giggle.

"That was a strange request."

"Hey, I'm a strange person," Link chuckled.

"To me, Link. You're only one thing," the smile faded from her mouth, "You're utopian." She tapped his nose and stood up. She had a trait that he'd often longed to possess. And that was devotion, pure and simple.

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More coming! Hopefully soon...

2. Back to Koholint: (02)

Chapter 2

It was an understatement to say that Link slept soundly that night. Let a storm ravage the land, a volcano cover him in burning lava, or an earthquake make the ground beneath him break in two, he still would not have woken, or even stirred in the slightest.

Of course, Marin was another story.

"Get up! I don't recall you being so very lazy!" Marin whined, leaning over his bed, "Link? Hello? Get up now!" She sighed with exasperation, turning around sharply and stalking out the door.

"If my words won't wake him, I know something that will," she

smirked, heaving a wooden bucket from the nearby well. She carefully undid the coiled rope, and carried it inside with a great deal of difficulty. "I'm giving you a last chance. Wake up," she whispered in a tone so soft it was not the least bit perceptible. "I tried..."

"What the hell was that for?" Link shrieked as the cold water engulfed him, drenching him from head to toe.

"You wouldn't wake up," Marin murmured innocently, letting the bucket dangle from her slender wrist.

"I'm...I'm..." he stuttered, absolutely shocked. His tunic clung to his skin and his bangs were matted to his face.

"Wet?"

Link rolled his eyes. "I'd say that's quite obvious, oh yeah, and I'm also freezing!"

"It's called drying off," she chuckled.

"Witty aren't we?"

"Why yes, now that you mention it."

"You'll be sorry, Marin...." he smiled mischievously, slightly seductively, advancing towards her.

"Get away from me..." she warned, backing up slowly. Link continued to walk towards her, unwaveringly. "I mean it..."

Marin shot into a quick trot, as she bolted out the door, slamming it behind her.

"It won't do you any good to run, I'm way faster than you," Link shouted, peeking his head out the door.

"In what way?" she chortled.

"Big mistake," Link muttered, edging towards the tree she'd ducked behind. He paused for a moment, as she contemplated her plan, waiting for her to make a move.

"Link, leave me alone! Back up!" she shooed him away briskly.

"Sure thing," he took a step backward. Marin allowed her mouth to curve into a disappointed pout as she took several modest sized steps away from him.

Link wasted no time.

"Gotcha!" he exclaimed, throwing his arms around her waist and lifting her off the ground in one swift motion.

"Let go!" Marin flailed about helplessly for a brief moment before resigning herself to her fate. "So what are you going to do? Douse me with a bucket of water?"

"I'm way more creative than that."

"So then..."she drifted off, ruminating what he'd just said. Her eyes lit up, and she began to struggle again. "You wouldn't!"

Link flashed her a naughty grin. "Try me."

"Let go, Let go, Let go!" Marin vociferated shrilly, as she continued to squirm under his grasp.

"Yeah, right," Link held her tightly, as he conveyed her towards the beach. "You might as well enjoy the ride Marin, because I have a feeling that I'm stronger than you."

"Let go of me!" she kicked at him.

"We're here already..." Link grinned as he neared the shore. It was a spectacular day. Mist rolling in from the horizon, the tart yet mellow shade of the sky. Even the subtle splashing of the waves was euphonious. "Too bad I have to interrupt it all," Link whispered to Marin, apologetically. She closed her eyes, pressed her lips together, and....

"SHRIEK!!!" Link plunged her into the water, immersing her in its morning chill. "I hate you!" Marin spat, coughing up the salty liquid between giggles. "You always have to go me one better." She stood up, flouncing away from him in a supercilious manner most unlike her. She folded her arms, stopping halfway across the beach, trying her best to look dignified despite her current, deluged state.

The two stood, saturnine, for several moments. Marin's eyes danced with the reflection of the water, somber, and still....

She cupped her hand over her mouth, trying to prevent the subdued laughter slipping from her lips. "It...wasn't...funny..." she started, "In the...least...I mean..." she blurted out, absolutely breaking down.

"So...you're laughing because it wasn't funny?" Link quipped, teasingly.

"I'm laughing because...well..." she broke off, opening her mouth once more, yet no sound coming out, as if she was muted.

"Marin? What's wrong?" Concern racked his every word.

"Turn...a...around..." she stuttered, completely frozen to the spot.

Link whirled about, unsheathing his sword, ready to battle what ever foe was nearby...

And halted right in his tracks. He'd never battled a creature ten times his size, and he didn't intend to start now.

"Two words for what to do in a time like this," he gulped, "Run fast."

"You don't have to tell me twice!" Marin's breath came rapidly, in uneven gasps.

"Then go!" Link turned towards the creature, that seemingly hadn't noticed them yet. It was a sea dragon of some sort, its back glimmering, a sleek black in color. Scales lined its body, reflecting red in the sun, yet black as well to the naked eye. Its head was huge, a mane of orange and yellow crowning it. And the eyes...a shade of blood red, piercing, even when they weren't turned towards you. He'd never seen anything like it. Not since his final confrontation with Ganondorf had he felt so much fear coursing through him. And Marin hadn't budged.

"Marin! Move it! Before it sees us!"

"I...I can't," she gasped.

"You...can't?"

"What is it?"

"I'll tell you when we're away from here. I know you're scared but if you want to live to see tomorrow you'll get out of here. Come on..."

"I just can't."

"Marin, if not for yourself, then go for me. Because I'm not budging until you decide to come with me," he stared at her for a moment, not moving, "Fine then, we'll both be eaten by this thing." And with that, Link sat down.

That was all the inspiration she needed. Marin shot down the beach, clamoring up the rocks, leaping over anything in her path, running at a speed so swift, Link could not keep up with her as she raced away.

"Tell me, how do you run so fast?" he called.

"I don't run with my feet Link, I run on fear," she gulped, picking up her pace.

They both stopped abruptly, far away from the roaring of the waves, drawing in the sharp, cool morning air. Link swallowed, trying to regain his composure as best he could.

"Well Marin, looks like you were right," Link panted.

"What is that thing? Link, I'm so..." she paused lightly, her eyes narrowing into slits, "No, I'm not afraid. I'm angry."

"You? Angry?"

"That monster could hurt my island. And I don't want it to. So guess what?" she eyed Link, a tempting smile crossing her lips.

"We're going to let it?" he tried hopefully.

"On the contrary. We're going to stop it."

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Chapter 3

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"From my quests I've learned many things," Link stated pointedly, "And one of them is that monsters don't travel alone. Oh yeah, and besides that, they always have a purpose."

"Really? I thought they randomly killed people," Marin grimaced, her face taut and nervous.

"No Marin. I mean it, what I'm trying to say is..." he faltered, but then spoke clearly, "I'm the reason that thing came."

Marin circled about him steadily, "Impossible. I called you here because I sensed danger."

"You called me here because you wanted me to come back."

"No Link! It wasn't that...not entirely at least..."

"Listen to me Marin! Your island is in trouble, I should know! Okay, maybe I didn't cause it and maybe I did, but the point is that we're both in trouble, as well as everyone else here. That dragon had a purpose, and I won't rest until I know what that purpose is."

"I know..."

"Here's what I think. You wanted me to come back, so you called to me from my dreams. Someone, somewhere knew that, they knew I'd return...and now Koholint's in danger. I know it's complicated, and there's more to this than meets the eye, but we'll figure it out."

Marin nodded, tracing her lips with her tongue. "I'm sorry to have caused this, Link. I mean, I've...I've endangered you, and maybe your life. If only I'd waited until a different time maybe, I shouldn't have called you at all..."

"Say it again," Link muttered.

"If only I'd waited for a different time....?" her voice drifted off, questionably.

"That's the answer to all of this. Time. This is real, and yet it's a dream. Marin, only time can get me back to Hyrule, and save Koholint."

"I can't take this..." her head was throbbing with confusion.

"Well, I'd say we should go relax by the shore, but that probably wouldn't be a good idea," Link chuckled.

Marin nodded, her expression unchanged, dark and demoralized as ever. She took Link's hand, not uttering a word, leading him outside, down to a small cove that the vast oceans could not touch. It was cool, shaded by the granite rocks above and most of all they were safe there, nothing could touch them.

"Strange..." Marin murmured, sitting down upon the sodden sand, "I could swear that it was bigger then this...the water seems to come up higher then before..."

"Are you sure?" Link asked, his face twisting with suspicion.

"I'm positive. I spend ever so much time here, I should know..." Marin cast a look downward, her eyes glimmering with a newfound fear, different then before.

"Just suppose, that this cove was getting smaller," he mused, fondling his new idea, "And just suppose that..." he drifted off, "Marin I think I know what's happening!"

"Clue me in then."

"Not yet, I need more proof first. Come on," he grabbed her by the arm, pulling her away from the cove, and out into the dazzling sunlight of the island. They hastened back to Marin's home, where Link insisted upon some string, and a sturdy branch.

"Well here's the string...but I haven't any branches around at the moment," Marin handed him a neat coil of string, frayed at the edges from its many years of uselessness.

"Then we'll get one outside. Hurry up, we don't have any time to waste!" Link exited the cabin as quickly as he'd entered, heading for the nearby forests.

Once under the woods protecting canopy, they immediately began to search for a branch.

Too short...

Too long...

Twisted...

It just had to be precisely the right size and shape.

Perfect.

"Marin! I found one. We've got to get back to the cove!" Link called to her.

"Alright, I'm coming," Marin's voice sounded across the quiet.

They made their way back to the inlet in total silence, both of their heads filled with infinite questions, and not a single answer. And yet, it was compelling to find the answer, almost as if they needed too. Link crouched down, ducking into the narrow opening. Carefully, he examined the spot where the waves just lapped the shoreline. He lay the branch across it with utmost precision, and secured it to the spot with the string.

"There you have it," he waved his hand at the marker he'd just created.

"Have what?" Marin asked curiously. She didn't see how this would help them solve any of the mysteries involving Koholint.

"I think your cove's getting smaller."

"That's preposterous," Marin said softly, almost trying to convince herself of the fact that it was so.

"So is this whole situation. But we'll know by the morning," Link yawned out the last words, enervation once more overtaking him. "I need sleep."

"Only if you promise to actually wake up tomorrow. I don't want to go through that ordeal again," Marin winced, recalling how very well, soaked she'd felt.

"I don't know..." Link grinned at her, "Okay, I guess so, but no water!"

"Agreed," Marin shook his hand firmly, and they both went back to her cabin.

"Hey, where's your dad?" Link suddenly asked, noticing that the bumbling man was oddly absent.

"Why he's out in the forest...." she drifted off, her voice lowering, "He should be back by now though. Well, he sometimes stays out for several days," Link noticed her brow furrowing in worry, but he chose to say nothing, Marin was stressed already, and didn't need to be riled up over nothing.

"Yeah, okay," he muttered agreeably, pulling off his boots and eagerly climbing into the other bed. Slumber came quickly, taking him into its grasp, smoothly, calmly, and he was asleep in a moment.

"Marin! I'm awake before you," Link tapped her repeatedly as she rolled onto her stomach, using her pillow to cover her head.

"I can't hear you," she grumbled, not yet ready to face another day as bemusing as the one before.

"We have to uncover the cause for that thing we saw yesterday," he urged her out of bed.

"Alright, I'm coming," she stretched. Another glorious day on the island of dreams. How dull. What she wouldn't give to see a billowing storm, or a cool fall of fresh snow.

Link rolled his eyes as she stayed, hidden under her many coverings. He wrested them off of her in one motion, leaving her huddled in a ball on the bare mattress.

"Did I ever tell you how obnoxious you are?" she growled, groping about for her slippers.

"No, but there's always a first time," Link sighed dejectedly, "Come on! We've got to check out the cove...."

"Stop whining. You're seventeen. Not three," Marin retorted as she

stood up, rubbing her eyes, then running a seashell comb through her carmine hair. "Alright, let's go," she held open the door as Link bounded outside, as if he was a mere child half his age.

But Marin sung a different tune when they reached the cove.

The branch had vanished...

...Or had it?

Link ran his hand through the surf. Nothing. He tried again where the water was deeper. Nope. One more time, he felt about, the water enveloped his arm up to his elbow now. He pulled out the branch, which was now peeling and soaked through.

"And that's that," he thrust the branch at Marin, a look of apprehensiveness crossing his face.

"I don't understand..." she murmured, examining the stick.

"This island's sinking into the ocean. Soon, there will be no trace that it ever was. And Marin, we're the only ones who can salvage Koholint now."

3. Back to Koholint: (03)

Chapter 4

"I just don't understand..." Marin whispered for the hundredth time, her pale cheeks streaked with dirt and hot tears.

"I wish I could tell you I did..." Link held her close to him. He knew little would console her now, but she needed to know that he was there for her, that she wouldn't be going through this alone.

"We're only people. We can't save Koholint," she sobbed, her entire body trembling, even under his reassuring embrace.

"Marin," he started, tilting her face up to him, "I have faith that we can. We've got to try at least." Link gently caressed her cheek, wiping away her tears with the softest of touches.

"It's no use. No matter how hard we try we'll still..." fresh tears streamed from her eyes, more urgent than before, "We'll still be terminated," she finished harshly.

"We won't be," Link ran a hand through his thick blonde hair, feeling how warm he was, feeling the grime and sweat on his skin, "I'll promise you one thing, Marin. And that's that if we are killed...then it will be together, battling with all our strength."

"Can you promise me something else?"

"What is it?" he stroked the side of her face gingerly.

"That you'll never leave me."

"Marin...I never want to leave you...but..." he broke off, unable to speak the last words, "We have to save Koholint. We have to decide

upon a plan."

"Yes, yes we do..that is, must..." she fumbled her words, her thoughts obviously not with the current situation.

"We'll do this logically. Okay, what's our goal?" Link asked in a sedate manner.

"Not to sink?" Marin gulped.

"Well that helps," Link muttered sardonically, "Listen Marin, do you want to save Koholint or not? Because sitting there, feeling sorry for yourself isn't going to accomplish a hell of a lot, believe me," he glared at her, absolutely vexed.

"No Link, you listen to me. You don't live here. You don't know this island like I do. Therefore you can't possibly know what it's like to be in this position," Marin said sharply.

"My land was also in danger! Did you forget that? I missed out on seven years of my life to save it! Do you know how much that infuriates me, even to this day?" he spat.

"I never even heard about this quest of yours! What? Do you think Koholint gets news of the outside world via whale or something?"

"The bottom line is, that if you don't want to drown along with this entire island, we'd better get a move on. Sitting around crying won't do anything!"

"Well I guess heroes never cry, huh Link? You've never been hurt before? You've never lost someone dear to you?" Marin's words were caustic to him.

"That's where you're wrong, Marin. Everyone I've ever known has left me. My mother, my father, even the Deku Tree who raised me passed. Saria, my best friend, I'll never see her again. Sure, it's great that Darunia is my sworn brother, but I'll never see him again either! Do you think that a mere peasant like myself is allowed to even lay eyes on the royal princess? That's not to mention the other sages, and all the Kokiri who don't remember me! And what about..."

"What are you talking about?" Marin enquired, completely lost in Link's babbles, to which she'd heard nothing of.

"I've suffered, Marin. More than you can imagine."

"As have I, Link," she placed a hand on his shoulder, "We both have."

"I'm sorry," he mumbled under his breath, feeling slight remorse for having spoken to her in such a way.

"Don't be. You're right, we need to take action immediately. Time is of essence. We must hurry," her voice took on a solicitous tone, anxious. "How does one go about...well, stopping an island from sinking?"

"If I knew that I'd be the one with the wisdom piece of the triforce. But there has to be a way. If there's one thing I've learned since becoming a hero, it's that nothing is impossible."

"Why don't we go take a look at the island, maybe we'll find a clue," Marin stood up.

"Good idea, but take this first," he handed her his heavy crossbow and a set of arrows, "You never know what sort of creatures might be lurking about."

"How do you use this?" Marin aimed the bow in a clumsy manner, rotating it awkwardly. Link suppressed a laugh as he demonstrated the proper technique.

"Got it?" he asked, handing back the weapon.

"Yeah...sure..."she muttered, rolling her eyes.

The beach was deserted, save a few crabs scuttling about. There was no sign that soon, those soothing waves would become unstoppable, and would swallow an entire land. Marin sat down, letting the water swirl about her feet.

"Could we dam it?" Marin asked, burying her toes into the moist sands.

"You can't dam the ocean, it's too big," Link paused, "too strong."

"We could erect a tower, so high that the waters would never reach us," she offered.

"We don't have enough time, and the island would continue to sink anyway. We'd be drowned sooner or later."

Marin heaved a sigh, her eyes darting about, desperately searching for an idea.

"Marin, there's no way we can stop the island from sinking. But maybe, we can still save our lives."

Marin turned to him, her eyes moist, "I want to save my island," she murmured flatly. "Along with my life."

"It's impossible!"

"If there's one thing I've learned from being with you, Link, it's that nothing is impossible. And I know that we can do this, you said so moments ago."

"I was wrong," he grumbled.

"No, I have faith that we can do this. And you know what they say: Faith can move mountains."

"Yeah, but can it stop the sea?" he raised his eyebrows expectantly. "If you ask me, there's only one thing we can do if we want to live. And we have to work fast."

"What?" Marin asked hurriedly.

"Build a boat, one that can take us away from here," he murmured, making a vague wave at their surroundings.

"That's...so obvious," she finished, her tone a mixture of confusion and relief. "And yet, I feel....it won't work."

"You never know until you try, I think we have to do this. It's our final hope," Link said solidly.

"Link, how can I leave Koholint? I've never ventured past its borders..." Marin sighed, "Where will I go?"

"You can come back with me," Link said flatly.

"To...your world?" Marin breathed, her eyes shimmering in the heat of the sun.

"Sure."

"Alright, we begin first thing tomorrow. We can save Koholint," she stuck out her hand, the current situation inducing them to think as one.

"Together, we can't fail," Link grinned.

* * * *

"I'm telling you it's true!" Marin insisted, her face pink with fury, "Why would I just make something like this up?"

"She's telling the truth! You're whole island will be gone in a matter of days!" Link said, his voice hoarse and irritated. And yet the people of Koholint did not know the meaning of disaster, and of fear. They refused to listen, so Link and Marin's words fell on deaf ears. All they ever heard in response to their pleas seemed to be 'preposterous,' or 'ridiculous.'

Every waking hour was spent plotting, every second counted, every minute wasted was fatal.

"We can't do this alone!" Marin muttered, as she gathered twigs and building materials.

"Well we have to try," Link retorted, wiping the sweat from his forehead.

"I'm so tired of trying. We can't do this, Link. Face facts for once."

"Stop it. I don't feel like taking this right now," Link squinted into the sun. In his world, in Hyrule, the same sun was beating down, casting light. His mind drifted...

"Don't you ignore me!" Marin snapped, pulling back into reality. "This will never work. We'll all drown. That's it!" She dropped her pile of wood, letting the branches scatter across the carpet of moss beneath her.

"Right Marin! That will solve everything!"

"It's all so completely hopeless..." she whispered, her emotional outburst fading as quickly as it came.

Link pulled her towards him, wrapping his arms about her shoulders. "We'll get through this. Trust me...I promise."

"I trust you Link...I trust you," she whimpered, moving closer to him.

"Marin, somewhere through all of this I..." Link bit his lip, tightening his grip on her. "You see..."he broke off abruptly.

"What is it?" Marin sat upright.

Link's eyes became glazed, his body restive, tensed. His face held an expression that Marin had never before seen in him. Strange...but she couldn't place it...

Fear?

That was inconceivable, it was impossible, unimaginable...

And yet she could tell Link was afraid.

"What is it?" she asked again, her voice ariose, childlike. She gently shook his arm.

"Hold on," Link mumbled under his breath, as he stood up. He would not get her worked up over nothing, she was distraught enough as it was. But in the thicket of woods he could swear he'd seen something. A subtle movement perchance...No, it was more then that. It was a glow, like a pair of eyes were boring into his very soul, seeing straight through him.

He unsheathed his sword, venturing towards the undergrowth, his voice caught in his throat. It wasn't some horrid monster, nor some beast of unseen grotesqueness...it was worse, far worse, and it was somehow...Familiar.

He'd seen those eyes before. So burning, so piercing, and yellow like that of a snake's. He'd felt the same deep feeling in his gut as he was feeling right at that moment. Not that long ago...

Back in Hyrule.

Something inside of him clicked.

He gasped, stumbling backwards. He would not go through it again. He could not go through it again.

He breathed heavily. "Ganondorf..."

>

Okay, there it is ^_^ Sorry it took so long. Anyway, please tell me what you think, suggestions, comments, whatever. If you like it I'll finish it, I sort of have writers block at the moment. Well, that's

it for now! Thanks!

>

Zellie *_^

4. Back to Koholint: (04)

Chapter 5

Link blinked his eyes rapidly. Nothing was there.

"I saw...someone...something..."he stammered.

"You're imagining things. In times like this your mind can play tricks on you," Marin whispered soothingly.

"No...It was real. I know it was."

"Link..."

"I can't do it again! I have to get off this island...Marin...I'm scared! I fear for our lives."

"Who did you see?"

"I saw pure evil. The one responsible for the downfall of Hyrule. The one to whom I lost seven years of my life. The one who ravaged the entire kingdom," he felt his eyes tearing with hatred, "Ganondorf."

"That name sounds...familiar," Marin murmured.

"How did he get here? He's trapped...exiled from the land forever!" Link bit his lip, his face tight, "Marin, he's in the sacred realm. No one can escape from there."

"It isn't a matter of escape. Anyone can reach Koholint if they try to...if they know the path. It's reached through your dreams Link..."

"Ganondorf doesn't have dreams, he has nightmares," Link spat furiously.

"No matter. He can still reach Koholint, because it...it isn't....an actual place," Marin finished, her words heavy with sadness.

"Kholint's real. You can reach it from your dreams, Marin. And dreams are always there even when nothing else is. Therefore it's real. More real than me, more real than you."

Marin shivered, a cooling relief coursing through her body. "Why is he here?"

"Because I am here. He wants me dead. And the only way he can reach me is from my sleep. Though I'm here, my body still lies at rest in my bed! But my soul, and my heart are here," he paused, shifting his

weight nervously, "with you, Marin."

Marin felt her body go stiff, and then relax under Link's warming embrace. She felt a rush of confusion, then of satisfaction, then of pure fulfillment, as Link pressed his lips against hers. She found herself melting, though she so wanted to be alert and in control. And then she shocked herself, pushing against his chest and breaking free of him.

"Marin..." Link whispered, taking her hand, trying once more to draw her close.

"No, Link."

"What do you mean no? What's wrong?" His face was tender, filled with compassion, with worry, and with a deep hurt.

"Years ago, when I first met you, I would have given my very soul to be with you, to experience what just happened. But not now, Link. Because we are not destined to be together, our lives follow a path, and our are headed in opposite directions."

"How can you say that Marin?" Link gasped.

"Our love is forbidden. I live in a world of dreams, while you live in reality. And never shall the two meet."

"Soon you'll be safe. I'll be safe. And Marin, we can be together."

"I sense it. Something will happen and I will not be with you. I cannot just leave Koholint, try as I might..." Marin whispered, fighting back tears.

"Damn it Marin! That's ridiculous!"

"No, it's fate."

"Then fate's ridiculous. Marin...I love you okay?"

No words could fit what she felt. Tears rolled down her cheeks, cool and comforting. Relieving. "Why? Don't. You shouldn't..."

"But I do. And you can't tell me how to feel."

Link sighed heavily, feeling a sort of desperation, and definitely pain.

"We don't need to build this anymore at least," he muttered, vaguely waving at the materials for the boat.

"What?" Marin whispered.

"We can save the island, Marin. We can save the people. And you'll be saved as well."

"How?" she breathed.

"Defeat Ganondorf. If he's gone, the island will rise once more."

"I think I'd rather take my chances with the boat..." she muttered.

"Well, we don't have much of a choice. But keep on your guard, there are creatures out there beyond your wildest dreams."

"Don't say that Link. My whole life's a dream. And it's only in my sleep that I can find reality."

* * * *

Marin leaned back, her shoulders sticky with sweat, her face streaked with dirt. Nothing was as it should be. Link was hurt, and she'd caused it. She didn't know how she'd save her own life, let alone the lives of everyone else. Her world was collapsing before her very eyes. And yet she was thriving on her own self pity. She felt wretched.

Why did she do it? He confessed that he loved her...and she'd shattered him! It was ironic that she always felt like he'd never want her. And now, he finally did, and she'd pushed him away.

"So you don't have to leave. Why can't we be together?"

Her stomach leapt into her throat and she whirled about.

Link.

"Because...."

"Can you leave Koholint?" Link asked.

"Yes. But I don't know if I can enter reality."

"Well, we won't know unless we try, right?"

"Uh huh," Marin muttered, her head throbbing with the heat, and with confusion.

"Listen Marin. I almost lost you once, and I don't want that to happen again," he knelt beside her.

"And I lost you as well. Link, you mean more than anything to me...but...I don't want to hurt you. We are just not destined to be together."

Some would call it a prophecy, Link knew it was just the way things went.

"Yeah, so I hear. I could stay here with you forever Marin...I don't need to leave anymore. Neither do you..."

"No Link. You can't stay in your dreams forever. Think of Hyrule...your princess....your life...." Marin whispered, her eyes not meeting his. "And I don't want you to fight that man. He sounds impossible to defeat!"

"It's the only way to save Koholint. And Marin, I'll do anything to save Koholint...I'll do anything to save you."

She felt her body drawing involuntarily closer to his. "I know you'll save us."

Link grinned, "I'll try Marin, I swear I'll try."

"So what's next?" Marin asked demurely.

"Next...I guess we find Ganondorf," Link grumbled.

"The water's rising quickly. Why doesn't anyone notice?" Marin shook her head, clearly exasperated at the ignorance of the people about her.

"They're oblivious to it. They don't the meaning of disaster. And they never will," Link paused, "Is something wrong?"

"Obviously," Marin replied hotly.

"Clever. Besides this entire situation, I mean."

"I don't know where my father is. I'm worried about him," Marin sighed.

"I'm sure he's alright. He's been gone before."

"Yes, but never for five days on end. He always returns home after three. I don't understand it...Link...you don't think anything happened to him do you?" her eyes shimmered with the movements of the waves, the clouds, everything at once. She felt a building dread in the pit of her stomach.

"No, of course not," Link replied in an unsure tone.

"Something's happened," Marin gasped, standing up swiftly. She breathed apace, running her hands repeatedly through her hair.

"I'm sure he's alright..." Link started.

"What's happened? If anything happened to my father I'll be the one to kill that monster, not you..." her voice was strong, unwavering.

"Marin, nothing's wrong."

"He may be hurt, ill...dead," she let the word slide from her tongue, coldly.

"Stop it! You're making assumptions!"

"Maybe I am and maybe I'm not. But something's dreadfully wrong, and we're going to search for my father."

"Okay, Marin. If it will calm you down," Link muttered agreeably, "We'll look first thing tomorrow." He yawned, peering up at the darkening sky, with it's ripples of stars.

"We're starting now. And no one rests until he's found," Marin folded her arms, daring Link to defy her. He rolled his eyes, giving in, and they headed towards the dark silhouettes of the far off hills.

>

Please review! I want feedback!

5. Back to Koholint: (05)

Chapter 6

Nothing could describe the look on Marin's face. Not shocked, not even upset...but so amorphous, so despairing and abject. She didn't even have to see his body to know her father's fate. The shreds of fabric, the hot, sticky blood on the ground, a wooden bucket, all its contents scattered about aimlessly...

"I don't believe it," she whispered, absolutely calm, as a port before a storm. "What do you think got him, Link?"

"I'm not sure," Link muttered in response, he knew she'd soon break down.

"What ever happened?" her voice wavered as she choked back tears.

"I'm so sorry." It was all that he could think of to say. Her father was everything she'd ever had.

"It's just not fair. He never did anything to anyone." Her breathing became uneven, trembling and rapid.

"I..." Nothing would console her, she was beyond the point where soothing words would help in the least.

"What the hell is this?" Her voice was soft, but filled with regret and hatred. "I thought everything that happened had a purpose. There is no reason behind this."

"Ganondorf doesn't need a reason to hurt...to kill..."

"Bastard," Marin glared at the devastation about her. "When you kill him Link, be sure it's slow. Be sure it's painful. And be sure he knows what it feels like to battle for your life."

Link stared at her. He didn't think Marin was capable of such hate.

She gathered up the tattered garments, the spilled mushrooms and plants, placing them in the bucket with utmost care. Her voice cracked with concern, her eyes clouded, but she did not cry. Not a single tear.

"For me to cry, to grieve would be like giving in to that tyrant," she muttered, trying to convince herself of that, so that she wouldn't break down. "I won't do that. I can't do that...it would be so..." she pressed her lips together, turned around and walked out of the forest. She would never return there. No matter what happened, she'd never go there again.

"Come on. We have to find Ganondorf," Link led her down the rolling paths, back to the shores, which were quickly disappearing.

"Where do you think he'll be?" Marin asked, her voice still shaking.

"Hiding. He's a coward deep down, but my guess would be the cliffs. Difficult to reach, and easy to fall from in case of battle."

They climbed up the jagged rocks, until they reached the dark caverns of the mountain.

"_Marin, duck_!" Link yelled, shoving her to the ground just an arrow whizzed by her head.

"What was that?" she panted, still kneeling on the rocks beneath her.

"We must be near. Prepare to fight," Link drew his sword. Marin's eyes widened as she clumsily took out the crossbow, fitting an arrow into the thick string.

Lizalfos.

Maybe ten...Maybe 20...Maybe 100...

It was impossible to tell.

Link felt his heart beating rapidly in his chest. He spun on his heels just in time to knock a Lizalfo to the ground with a quick swipe of his sword. His head pounded as about ten of them clustered about him, swords drawn. His concentration was broken by Marin's constant screaming, and the entire situation was looking dire. He was outnumbered by...a lot. Link wiped his forehead, slashing at a Lizalfo and stabbing through its armor. He sliced another's hand, causing its weapon to clatter to the ground. Another down, and another. But it just wasn't enough!

"Marin! Are you alright?" Link gasped as he sliced another monster.

"I can't get the arrows to work!" she shrieked, "I've been hitting them on the head with this bow. It works well!"

Link rolled his eyes, almost laughing despite their current situation. He felt a sharp pain as a sword struck his face, slicing his skin cleanly, right down to his chin. He clenched his teeth, stumbling backwards.

Heroes don't cry.

They don't shriek in pain.

They fight.

And they win.

He swung at the nearby pack madly, letting the anger and pain take over his body. He felt sick and dizzy, drenched with his own sweat, and covered in blood, some his own, some of his enemies whom he was

slaying.

"We can't keep this up much longer," he heard Marin's voice trilling across the battle.

"I know that, but we have to. It's not like his guards are just going to disappear! If we want to kill Ganondorf, we have to defeat these first!" Link grunted as he slaughtered another Lizalfo.

"Link, we have to get away from here! Lure them towards the cliffs, where we can escape," Marin gasped.

"Alright," Link muttered, relenting. He slowly backed up, luring the fiendish pack towards the edge, where him and Marin might have a chance of surviving. He felt the cold blade of a knife slicing across his back. Marin didn't seem to be having much trouble. The Lizalfos knew their true enemy, and it was him; the Hero of Time.

He edged towards Marin, his sword swiping vigorously all the while, till they were back to back, both surrounded.

"There's only one way to go from here," Link gulped.

"We're trapped."

Link flashed her a grin. "Not exactly..."

"But the only way to go is..." her voice trailed off, "down..."

"When I say go, Jump."

"It's suicide!" Marin whispered feverishly.

"So is staying here."

"Link...we can't...."

"Trust me." He held out his hand, as she grasped it tightly in hers. "One...Two...Three!"

Link took a step back, feeling only the air beneath his feet.

* * * *

Link groaned. His head was throbbing, his entire body was sliced, probably scarred permanently in places. But he was alive.

Marin, however, was unconscious. A large lump was on her forehead, black, blue and a thin trickle of blood leaked from the center.

"Marin, wake up," Link whispered gently.

She moaned softly, cringing, and then rolling over.

"It's alright. We're both alive," he examined himself, noting his current state, "At least mostly."

Marin fluttered her eyes, opening them cautiously. "Where are

we?"

"You passed out from the fall. So did I, but I woke up first I guess. It's already getting dark again," he rubbed his head, trying to knock some sense into himself.

"Link I..."she broke off, gasping, "You're so...hurt..." she whispered, caressing the side of his face.

"I've been hurt worse then this. I'm fine. But are you?" He rose to his feet, and helped Marin up. She clenched her fists in anguish.

"I'm sore all over," she groaned.

"At least we're not dead. Those Lizalfos would have killed us," Link paused, "We'll rest up and try it again tomorrow."

"What?" Marin yelped, eyeing him to see if he'd been jesting.

"If we go during the day there will be far less guards. Any minions of Ganondorf don't do as well in sunlight as in darkness."

"We were almost killed!" Marin exclaimed.

"Listen, the water's rising more quickly every hour. If we aren't killed by those creatures, we'll be drowned. So are you with me or not?"

"I..." Marin glared at him, faltering, "Yes, I'm with you."

"Great. Let's get to sleep. And we rise first thing tomorrow, if you want to stand any chance with those Lizalfos you'd better learn how to handle a bow and arrow. Clobbering them on the head isn't to effective," he grinned at her.

"Would you care to test that?" she giggled, raising the bow above her head and advancing towards Link.

"Ahh...I'll take your word for it..."he smiled apologetically.

"Come, we must tend to your wounds," she looked down at her dress, her legs, her hands, all covered in grime, streaked with dirt, splotted with blood. "And mine."

Link nodded, breathing in the sharp, morning air. He felt like the entire island was alive, not troubled, just as it had always been. Yet he had an unsettling feeling that he himself was, and that soon enough this would all be over. And whether that was good or bad, Link hadn't a clue.

>

Chapter 7

Link woke up covered in a cold sweat. Something was dreadfully wrong, he felt the impending doom in his gut. No matter how many times he rolled over, changed his position, or rearranged the covers something

would not let him rest. Fear, most likely.

He heard the low rumble of thunder in the distance. It matched his mood, and the situation at hand. Pushing off the thick coverings, he stood up and walked to the door. He slowly turned the knob, cautiously listening to the creaking of its hinges, the patter of the rain, even the subtle rolling of the morning mists. Why did he feel so ill-omened?

The sight that met his eyes shocked him to the core.

He knew he would confront Ganondorf that day, because whenever the evil man was near all the elements seemed to go into a rage, tossing, binding together, and becoming wicked.

All he could see was darkness.

Brewing clouds, pitch black, and even darker waters.

Midnight black.

Everywhere.

The salty ocean swirled about his feet, just dampening the soles of his boots. The island was sinking. It was dropping into the churning waters so quickly that he could feel the movement. Even the oblivious people of Koholint could not ignore it. He could hear shouts and cries in every direction. Cries of distress, cries for help...

And he was the only one who could silence them.

He slammed the door.

"Marin! Get up now!" he muttered, shaking her desperately.

"Link? It's the middle of the night, go back to sleep," she murmured drowsily, rubbing her eyes and rolling over.

Link breathed, trying urgently to stay composed. "We're sinking. Fast. We have to go find Ganondorf or we're all going to drown."

"That's nice but..."she broke off. "What did you say?"

"You heard me Marin, and I don't have time to sit here explaining it to you. We have to go now," Link gasped.

Marin choked back any words, flinging the blanket off of her and practically falling from her bed in her haste. She stumbled outside, practically dragging Link out with her, but released him at once upon seeing the island...upon seeing _her_ island.

She swallowed hard. Swallowing her fears, her emotions, her feelings, and only allowing her hatred for Ganondorf to rise to the surface.

The rocks were slippery with the freshly falling rain, making it difficult to clamber up them, and grip the surfaces. But they managed to make it to the cliffs atop, soaked to their very skin. Link's bangs matted to his forehead, obstructing his view. Marin's dress

clung to her skin, outlining her slender form. By the time they reached the caverns they were both breathless and panting heavily.

"Stay alert. You never know when he'll appear," Link warned her grimly, wrapping his hands around the sword forcefully.

"What do we do if we see him?" Marin whimpered.

"We fight to the death."

She felt her mouth go dry.

And then she felt a cold, sharpness at her throat. She gasped.

Link spun about. "Let her go!" he whispered, his voice full of menace.

Someone had a hold of her waist. And there was a knife only inches away from her throat. Marin saw her entire life flashing before her eyes. And she broke down.

"Let me go! You killed my father! You ravaged an entire land without giving it a thought! You've ruined my beautiful island! Let go of me this instant," she growled, her voice racked with a mixture of fury and tears.

She knew it was Ganondorf. The cold grasp. The twisted feel of him. She didn't have to think twice. She didn't even have to see him.

"I said leave her alone. Your battle's with me, not her," Link snarled, advancing steadily.

"One more move and I'll slit her throat, Hylian," Ganondorf scoffed, speaking for the first time. His voice was piercing, sharp and icy.

Link froze.

"I dare you," Marin murmured, struggling under his grasp. "What will you gain from it? One more death, one more life taken? Link can still defeat you, and you know that. You may take my life, but you'll never take his."

She stifled a scream as he slit her down the side of her face, drawing clean, scarlet blood from her skin.

"Stop it," Link said through clenched teeth, his breathing growing more and more nervous.

He cut the other side of her face, sharper, deeper...Marin bit her lip. She would not cry out.

"One more move..."Ganondorf whispered savagely.

"Don't be a coward! Stop killing the innocent. I'm the one responsible for your fate. I'm the one who had you banished forever. I stole your power, your dreams, your entire kingdom. I defeated you, Ganondorf."

He let go of Marin, shoving her to the ground with the tip of his sword, slicing across her back, ripping the her dress, tearing her skin. She doubled over in pain.

"Fuck you!" Link lunged forward, swinging his weapon viciously.

"Rather high strung for a hero, aren't you?" Ganondorf pointed his sword at Link.

"How the hell did you get to Koholint?" Link snapped.

"Why, through my dreams of course."

"You don't dream. You're not capable of rest and slumber," Link's eyes became slits in his face.

"You will be put to death tonight," Ganondorf retorted, moving closer to Link, waving his sword in threatening circles.

Link swallowed, not saying a word. Maybe he would, but maybe he wouldn't. He glanced down at his feet to see the icy ocean water splashing over them.

"We'll all be drowned!" he growled, "You will too! Stop it!"

"As long as you die, I don't care about myself," Ganondorf smirked.

"Come over here and fight," Link stood still, his eyes locked with Ganondorf's.

"I'll make you a deal. One that you can't refuse."

"And what's that?" Link asked, not moving an inch.

Ganondorf turned around swiftly, lifting Marin clear off the sodden ground.

"Leave her alone! This is between you and me!" Link yelled over the now roaring waters.

"I'm ready to kill this girl," Ganondorf whispered, pointing the sword straight at her chest, "But I'll tell you what. Your life or hers? The choice is yours."

Link gaped at him. It was impossible...he shuddered. He'd lost Marin once and he wasn't about to let it happen again. "Will it save Koholint?"

"The island will rise again."

"Don't do it Link! I'm not worth it. Kill him and you'll be saved, as will my island," Marin sobbed, her breath coming in uneven gasps. Ganondorf dug the sword into her skin, just deep enough to draw blood.

"Alright!" Link dropped his sword, letting it clatter to the ground.

"A wise choice, hero of time," he kept his hold on Marin, but sheathed his sword. Link walked over, walking to his death. He thought of Zelda, of Hyrule, of his entire amazing life, and he realized what a difference he'd made. Though few knew of his sacrifice, his bravery and courage, he'd saved his world, and he was now saving another. The only cost for this heroic act was his existence. It was a small price to pay in reality.

"Any final requests?" Ganondorf asked contemptuously.

"Only that you'll never escape from that hell you're trapped in. And that no other world shall ever have to suffer from your wrath," Link growled. "How do I know you won't hurt Marin after I'm gone?"

"You have my word."

"That means nothing. Let her go and I'll give you my word," Link's voice was low, "And my life."

"Your word means nothing to me."

"I give you my word as the hero of time," Link knelt down, removing his hat.

Ganondorf nodded. "Very well, but if you so much as move, I'll sink this island completely, and you'll _all _be killed."

"I won't budge," Link whispered.

Ganondorf thrust Marin away, sending her sprawling onto the ground. She didn't even feel her hatred for him...only feeling her longing to take Link into her arms...to tell him...

She knew it would be no use. She felt her mouth opening, to shriek, maybe to whisper, maybe just to cry out, but nothing came out. She recoiled in horror as she watched Ganondorf raise his sword above him, and as she watched Link bowing his head in defeat.

>

Feedback! Next part will be the end finally...^_^

6. Back to Koholint: (06)

Chapter 8

Somehow in the direst of situations, we can understand things we could never grasp before, and it was at that moment when something in Marin's mind clicked....

The bow. It was cast on the ground beside her, a single arrow still fitted into its curved body. She bit her lip, mustering all of her courage and taking it into her hand. One chance, an absolute gamble, a final hope. So many thoughts flew through her mind, but the actual event took mere seconds. Marin swallowed, aimed the bow, closed her eyes, and shot it.

Ganondorf's scream was macabre, absolutely appalling to the ears. Her eyes opened just in time to see the great, twisted sword fall from his hands and drop to the ground below. The arrow pierced his armor as if it was made of nothing but air. Link shot up, fumbling for his sword in the increasing darkness. As the man crumbled to the ground in agony, Link rose above him.

"This is for Hyrule. This is for Tarin. And most of all this is for Koholint," Link raised his sword slowly, allowing fear to seep into Ganondorf's mind in his final moments.

"No, Link," Marin stopped him gently, taking the sword from his hand.

"No?" Link gaped at her.

"He is mine to kill," she whispered, her eyes narrowing, "Not yours."

She encircled him, keeping her eyes fixated on him at all times. Link couldn't fathom Marin wanting to kill, even someone as minacious as Ganondorf. "And this," she said pointedly, "Is for Link."

Marin drove the sword into his chest, letting it pierce his heart. Correction...he hadn't a heart, only emptiness where one should have been. Though it was a lurid sight, she found that she could not take her eyes away, as the Gerudo began to choke on his own blood. She winced. It was almost pathetic, but she would never have the least bit of pity for him.

"You may have killed me," he choked out, "but I will take you all with me." With his last ounce of strength he raised his great, metal clad arms, summoning forces beyond their control. "This island will...sink...." he slurred his words unable to keep his life for another minute.

Marin blinked her eyes. Ganondorf was dead. And she was the one who killed him. She turned to Link searching for her voice, her soul once more.

And she watched as the hero of time broke down.

"There's nothing we can do. We're insignificant. I'm insignificant...." he sobbed harshly.

"Link," she whispered, putting out a hand to comfort him, as he'd so often done for her.

She didn't finish her sentence as she looked out over Koholint. It looked eerie, dark rolling mists and churning waters...Marin lowered her head sorrowfully...

The waters

The tossing ocean.

The black seas.

She gasped, realizing that she was knee deep in the frigid waters. Ganondorf was gone, but soon they would all pass too, Koholint would

be but a memory, and not even a dream...

"I knew it! No matter what you do you can't change fate! We're all gonna drown!" Link screamed, his voice racked with hatred, racked with regret...

Regret that it was going to end like this. Regret that he'd never led a normal life. And regret that because of him...

Koholint would die too.

"Don't say that," Marin murmured, her voice tranquil yet somehow hurt.

Link looked back at her, captivated by her every word. She was the only one who could find hope in certain death. The only one who could find light in the darkest of nights. He shivered as he felt the ocean swirling about his waist. He felt his body going numb with the icy coldness of the water.

"Don't ever say that," Marin said again, "because it's a lie."

Link swallowed his words, there was nothing more he wished to say. Except to Marin, if only to tell her that everything would be okay. He trudged heavily across the rising waters, every inch feeling like a mile, every second an eternity.

"I know it, Marin," he whispered, "and we'll live through this."

"No, Link," she said quietly, her eyes shimmering with tears, "we won't. But we'll make it through this."

He couldn't think of anything to do, anything to say, but he wrapped his arms around Marin, a feeling of determination surging inside of him. He couldn't explain it, define it, know what it was but...he could feel it.

"Would you do anything to save Koholint, Marin?"

"Why...of course," she choked out softly.

"Is that a promise?"

"I'd do anything to save my island and its people," she replied glancing at the sea, now splashing against her chest, quickly rising to her shoulders.

"Then I guess this is goodbye," Link whispered.

"What?" Marin's voice was like an echo of himself.

"I caused this. And I'm the only one who can end it. Marin, if I leave, Koholint will be saved," each word cut into her, sharper than Ganondorf's sword ever was.

"You can never come back..." she tilted her face upwards, the water licking her neck, stinging her still open wounds with its salt. "You're not just anything Link...you're different..."

"You promised, and I won't let you back out."

"You said you's never leave me," Marin whispered, hot tears mixing with the cold ocean that was now engulfing her entire body.

"I said I never wanted to leave you, and I don't...Marin, I want to stay with you forever."

"You'll awaken, Link. And I'll never be a part of you again..."

Link felt a single tear caressing the side of his face, "Just remember me forever," he murmured, pressing his lips urgently against hers.

Marin felt the waves crashing against her body, she felt the cold water rising steadily past her chin, but most she felt Link all throughout her, feeling his tender hold on her very soul. And she found her strength.

"Don't forget me," she backed away feeling the ocean lifting her momentarily off her feet.

"Never. Marin..." Link paused, "I love you." He fumbled in the dark waters, reaching into his tunic, matted to his body, and he handed her a single orchid. Its petals worn and tattered, its color so pale it looked white...

And he dove down into the turbulent seas.

For a moment he felt an urge to just soar back to the surface, the thought of breathing in the water surrounding him was so frightening...but he had to for Koholint, and most of all, for Marin.

Link felt his entire body going into shock. Many times, he'd looked death in the eyes, and yet never before had he tasted it in all its horror. He felt his body going rigid, his mind fading into total oblivion...then everything went black...

* * * *

Link groaned, his eyes fluttering open. The air was cool, soft crickets chirping out into the night. Outside, he could see the dark green silhouettes of the trees, the golden life that was in everything in Hyrule swirling past in the subtle breezes. He opened his mouth, coughing up salty water mixed with his own blood.

He was back.

Never before had he remembered Koholint, but he knew he'd never forget it again. He knew he'd never again return, and never again would he see Marin. At the thought his soul was ripped in two...but he couldn't be ruined by a dream...

"It's a dream," he muttered, his mind controlling his voice. Yet somehow that was wrong...

"Maybe it's not though. Maybe it's reality, and can only be reached through your imagination," he breathed, allowing the realization to seep in.

Allowing the truth to seep in.

Never again did Link return to the island of dreams, though on many restless nights he could still feel the warm sea air caressing him in its folds. And of Koholint's fate, he never knew what happened, but deep inside he felt he'd somehow saved it. Sacrifice had a whole new meaning from that day forth. Not of life, not of death, but of giving the most precious thing in one's life...to him, Marin.

She'd given him back his life, and in his time back with her he'd learned what it truly meant to simply love. She'd returned his soul, that he now knew he'd left at Koholint so many years before. And as he lay on his bed his mind drifted...

To Koholint...

To the splashing of the waves against the shore...

To Marin's sweet voice trilling across the sands...

And he knew he'd never again be alone.

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The End ^_^ Please tell me what you think, I really appreciate all the lovely reviews I've gotten! Thank you. And if anyone has any idea for my next story...e-mail me!! Hope you enjoyed it.

End
file.